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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Mythology of Greece and Rome.* Presented with Special Reference to Its Influence on Literature. By ARTHUR FAIRBANKS. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1907. Pp. xvii+408. \$1.50.

When one considers the large number of books on classical mythology which are now accessible to the English reader, it would seem to require considerable courage to attempt another in the same field, but the results of Professor Fairbanks' labors have justified his courage in presenting again the classic tales, so old and yet so little time-worn, so familiar and yet so little understood. A complete and consecutive reading of the volume leaves one with a sense not only of the difficulty and magnitude of the task, but also of the fidelity and good judgment with which the task has been accomplished. While such a book can never take the place of a mythological dictionary, it is on the other hand true that the mythological dictionary will generally be found to be inadequate to convey the larger and organizing notions of unity, continuity, and local grouping under which the myths may so satisfactorily be considered.

In his introduction the author takes up such subjects as the definition of myths, the origin and development of myths, the interpretation of myths, mythology and religion. Brevity marks the treatment of these matters. Perhaps the intention was to whet, not satisfy, the appetite.

The main body of the work is presented in two parts: Part I, Myths of the Gods; Part II, Myths of Heroes. The heroes are effectively grouped, as far as possible, according to locality. Sound judgment and wise self-restraint have prevented the author from venturing too far into the field of interpretation, but readers of the book will doubtless be pleased, nevertheless, with the considerable number of interesting and seemingly justifiable suggestions touching the significance of the individual myths or of the supernatural beings that figure in them.

The array of quotations from Latin, English, and other literatures, and the host of references without quotation, are such as to accomplish a leading purpose of the book, viz., to show how the ancient classical myths have influenced later literature.

The illustrations, taken judiciously from a large number of vase paintings, from coins, wall paintings, statuary, etc., form an interesting and helpful feature of the work.

What appeared to me to be the few slight faults or defects of the book I respectfully subjoin: The god Priapus is not mentioned. He might well, perhaps, have been given a place (somewhat out of sight, if so desired) among the other nature divinities. On p. 287 mention might well have been made of the metamorphosis of Cadmus and Harmonia into serpents. Then the quotation from Arnold would have more point. On p. 170, l. 14 *Favorinus* should be *Favonius*. P. 368, l. 4 *nine* should be *eight*. Cf. *Il. II*, 313. P. 275, l. 3 *father-in-law* should be *step-father*. P. 318, l. 19 *Isobates* should be *Iobates*. Violence is done the penultimate quantities of the following words as they appear

in the index with accents marked: Agāve, Echion, Eriphyle, Ixion, Lemures, Thalia. The index is not fully satisfactory either in accuracy or completeness. A few little mistakes in English or proofreading added to the above would make up the sum total of my strictures on a book the perusal of which has proved, as a rule, stimulating and satisfying in proportion to the care and pains spent in examining and testing it.

I will conclude with what may be thought more of a criticism on myself than on the book. Professor Fairbanks says (p. 141): "There was almost nothing of that sentiment of pleasure in the facts and phenomena of nature which we feel today; our love of the mountains and the plains and the sea, our enjoyment of a waterfall, our delight in an extended view, played little or no part in the life of the Greeks." I have never been able to believe what so many have averred about the alleged lack, on the part of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of an appreciation for the beauties of nature. Their literatures may not teem with enthusiastic references to such beauties, but in the aggregate there is in them much to indicate lively appreciation of nature's charms. Further, the charm and grandeur of view, from many of the sites chosen for their great temples and theaters, as at Athens, the Heraeum, Kalaurea, Epidaurus, and Sunium, not to mention others, make it difficult to believe that the aesthetic sense toward nature was in any wise lacking or in abeyance in those who selected those sites with their far and glorious views.

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*The Arthur of the English Poets.* By HOWARD MAYNADIER. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1907. Pp. viii+454.

The vigor and beauty of the Arthurian legends have made them popular through many centuries and in several languages. They have swayed gentlefolk and simple folk alike; they have been the basis for many a doctorate thesis, and (shades of old romance!) some of them are now set for college-entrance requirements in English. Yet the Arthurian legends are not merely a matter for embryonic doctors of philosophy and immature pupils in high schools; they are the stuff of which much of our modern art life is made. To know *Lohengrin*, the story of the Swan-Knight sent from the Grail Castle to aid Elsa of Brabant, to appreciate the great musical tragedy of *Tristan and Isolde*, to understand Wagner's *Parsifal*, to judge Mr. Abbey's mural decorations in the Public Library of Boston, and to read Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* intelligently, one must know something of the storehouse whence come these stories told in music, painting, and poetry. Consequently any book which enlightens us on the diverse sources of these legends, the course of their history, and their application in song and story is worth our serious consideration, and if it be a worthy book it should have our grateful commendation. Such a book is Dr. Maynadier's *The Arthur of the English Poets*. Dr. Maynadier begins his book with an account of the historical Arthur, of whose existence there is now scarcely any doubt, and traces the growth and variations of the Arthurian legends through the Middle Ages. The stories of Merlin, Lancelot, The Holy Grail, Tristan and